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VOL. III.

CLOVERPORT, KENTUCKY, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 1879.

NO. 35.

The Song.

From the Courier-Journal.

GOD'S TEMPLE.

BY WALLACE GREVILLE.

God lives not in the temple
Upward by human hands,
Bedecked with gold and jewels
And the art of many lands,
Carved altars, glowing pictures,
The wide and lofty fane,
With their opulent music
And their glittering windows—
God speaks not in men's creeds,
Full of bitterness and hate,
That rob the soul of happiness
And leave it desolate!
He exalts not this believer
While the other one he deems;
He hates no man's religion;
He hates the heathen's shame!
God hath built himself a temple
In every human soul,
And His wondrous love and mercy
Through its aisles and arches roll
As the waters of the Jordan
Through the garden Adam lost,
And to every soul whisper
The story of His love and grace.
Let the priesthood fight and wrangle
O'er bitter, worn-out creeds
Of the religion of profession,
But not of Christ's deeds;
Let the sinner swell in thunder,
Let the clergy rave and rant;
Let the bishops dwell in splendor
And the priests their masses chant!
God is not in their theaters
Of pomp and pride, and show,
Where jeweled vestments glitter
And painted wax-light glow!
But He dwells with those who love Him,
And love their fellow men,
Who worship Him in simplicity,
And live as best they can!

The Story.

CHRISTIAN'S LOVE;

—OR—

THE PEARL OF BANNER-CROSS.

CHAPTER I.

Twilight is gathering; the flowers are closing their petals; the birds are seeking their nests; a sweet calm, as of the Sabbath, rests over all.

It is growing dusk in Castleford Parsonage. Through the small oriel windows of the study, with their narrow bordering panes of rich stained glass, the fading light of day comes but dimly—so dimly that a gentleman who has been reading there, without interruption, for hours, closes his eyes, and rising from his seat, walks towards the window overlooking the quaint, old-fashioned garden.

He stands there for a time, in evident enjoyment of the evening and the scene his eyes rest upon; for the garden is pleasant, though it is old-fashioned.

A broad alley runs straight through it. On each side grow pear and apple trees with great, gnarled, moss-covered trunks, and mistletoe growing among the arching boughs.

Rose-trees are planted between, and nearer the house there is a smooth lawn dotted with beds of gay, fragrant flowers.

The light grows dimmer, yet still the man retains his position. The early June day has been hot and oppressive, and the cool breeze that has sprung up with the twilight is refreshing and grateful.

The man's form is tall and strongly built, yet not devoid of a certain air of grace and refinement, which extends itself to his face; a face that is pleasant to look upon, every feature being firm and reliable, telling of earnestness and nobility of character. The hair is chestnut; the eyes, appearing almost black at times, are, in reality, dark blue.

Calm and sweet still is the evening, with a stillness that has in it something of solemnity; but by-and-by the room fills with the sound of softly-pealing bells borne on the breeze from the little church hard by.

The Castleford bells have chimed the hours of five and eight from time immemorial. The sound disturbs the man from the reverie into which he has fallen.

"Eight o'clock," he murmurs, half aloud, half to himself; "eight o'clock, and Pearl has not been here yet."

Then he walks slowly to the other window, the one commanding a view of the principal approach to the Parsonage.

Not so pleasant is the outlook from this window as from the other. A broad gravel path leading down to a gate, a narrow strip of lawn interspersed with flower-beds, a narrow belt of shrubbery, and a few tall elm-trees, shutting in the house from the road—this is all.

The door opens slowly and a lady looks in; even in the dim light may be traced the strong likeness she bears to the occupant of the room. They are brother and sister. There is the same tall form, here, however, being lighter and womanly; there is the same broad white forehead, crowned with rippling chestnut hair; there are the same dark blue eyes, out of the depths of which look purity and truth; the same lips, the curves of which speak of firmness and evenness of disposition admirably blended, and over all is the same air of dignity and refinement.

"Christian," she says, still standing in the doorway, "may I come in? Have you done with your books for this evening?"

"Come in, Nell," he tells her, with a pleasant smile of welcome. "The light is too dim for me to read any longer."

They are pleasant voices, both of them; refined and cultivated.

"Shall I ring for lights?" the lady asks, coming further into the room.

"Not unless you desire them for yourself, Nellie. The glowing is too pleasant to be lost."

But it is evident that the lady does not desire them, for the moment across to where her brother stands, and links her arm with his.

"You have had a very easy day, Christian?"

"Very, Nellie," he replies.

"You have not been out even for a walk, Christian."

"There are but few sick people just now in Castleford," he says, avoiding a direct answer; "and you know, Nell, how averse I am to visiting for the sake of visiting."

A little cloud passes over Nellie Graham's face; it may be seen even in the shadowy room.

"Don't you think, Christian,"—Nellie speaks with more than her usual gentleness—"that there is just a bare possibility of your carrying that prejudice too far?"

"No, Nellie."

He speaks with prompt decision. But it is a matter that has troubled Nellie Graham for many a day; she will pursue the subject now it has once been broached.

"You know best, of course, Christian; but I can not help thinking that, if you would turn yourself from your beloved books, and go out among your parishioners a little more frequently, it would be better for yourself, and afford them greater satisfaction."

"First no one charges me with neglect of duty, Nellie?"

"There is something akin to wounded feeling in the tone. Nell detects it in the slightly quickened utterance."

"No one could do that, Christian."

"A breach of politeness and common kindness—Is that it?"

But the girl is some minutes before she replies, and even then her words seem to bear but little direct reference to the question her brother has asked.

"I have been out for such a pleasant walk," she begins, with some little hesitation, and lingering over the words, "through the Banner-Cross woods, Christian. The trees are all out in full leaf now, you know."

"Well?" the brother interrogates, as the girl again pauses.

"On coming back through Banner-Cross Park, I met the whole party of friends."

"Pearl was Pearl with them, Nell?"

"Pearl and Mr. Frith, and a gentleman whom I have never seen before; a gentleman whom at first glance one might be tempted to think a foreigner."

"And young Woodford and Squire Reynolds and the usual set of ladies—were they all there, Nell?"

"There were more than usual, Christian. They were laughing and chattering, and seeming very gay."

"Pearl has not been here to-day, Nell. This fresh air of visitors accounts for it."

"I often wonder how she keeps up the habit of coming at all, Christian, and wonder still more often how, amidst the gaiety and festivity, she still retains her childish simplicity and innocence."

"She is just as her mother was, Nell. I remember, when I was a boy, how she used to come in the same manner every day."

"The love between her and our mother was rare, Christian."

"As rare as it was warm and tender. I have seen our mother restless, and almost unhappy—she could never be quite that, you know—if Mrs. Frith did not come all day. It is seldom that school-girl's friendship outlasts marriage, but theirs never wavered; it was true and steadfast."

"It must have been a comfort to Mrs. Frith, Christian; her life must have been an unhappy one with a husband so unsympathetic."

"Most unhappy. If ever a woman died of a broken heart, it was little Pearl's mother."

"And yet Mr. Frith is so fond of Pearl; only see how he indulges her in everything!"

"Yes; he is fond of her with a selfish fondness; I do not think that his love would stand the test of opposition to his wishes."

"Shall I ring for lights now, Christian?"

"No, Nell, not yet."

CHAPTER II.

In the little study the shadows have gathered thickly; with the exception of the two figures standing together, no object can be plainly discerned there; yet all the same, the man manifests a strange reluctance to leave the window.

"Watch the stars twinkling in the sky, Nell; how beautiful it is! Presently the moon will come sailing in the blue-bellied heavens."

Who is it, dear, that says, "Never one star shines alone; there is always another to keep it company?"

"I do not remember."

"And so the party you met in the park were very gay, Nell; Pearl among the rest?"

"Pearl among the rest, Christian. Who should she not be; young, rich and beautiful?"

"Ay! why indeed?"

"Christian,"—and again the slow hesitation before he perceptibly in the lady's voice and manner—"I have not yet delivered the message Mr. Frith had me deliver to you."

"A message to me, Nell? What is it?"

"He asked me, Christian, how it was that they never saw you at Banner-Cross, and told me to ask you if it was a part of a minister's duty to ignore his chief parishioners because their mode of living was a little more gay than his own?"

"And you, Nell, what did you say?"

"That your poor parishioners look up to much of your time; and that they had come to what they call your 'little attentions'; while he had so many always ready and anxious to serve him. I gave him, in addition, your own reason; that you disliked visiting merely for the sake of paying a visit."

"What followed, Nell?"

"He laughed at me, good-humoredly enough, but said that it was a poor, paltry

excuse. 'Tell him,' he cried, 'that it is pride that keeps him away. He is poor and proud! The Castleford people say that he makes as much fuss over himself as though he were a king!'

The lady's cheeks were burning fiercely before she had completed her sentence.

"He never sent such a message as that," Christian Graham begins hotly; then he pauses, and presently adds, with a slight laugh, "But I don't know why any thing he said should astonish me."

"I did not know that Mr. Frith deemed you poor, Christian."

"It matters little in what estimation he holds us, Nell. I know that I count myself rich indeed in comparison with Mr. Frith. Did Pearl hear the precious message?"

"She took no notice of it, if she did; but I saw a bright color flush her face, and she gave the short gay laugh she always gives when any thing annoys her."

"Christian," the lady says again, after a silence of some minutes, "I really wish that you would go out a little more than you do."

"Why, Nell?"

"It would be good for you, and—"

"And," her brother interposes, "your sisterly pride and affection take alarm when the good people of Castleford tax me with undue pride."

But as he speaks there comes the sound of an open gate, then quick, light footsteps pass up the walk and through the hall, and then a sweet winsome face peeps into the room, and a fresh girlish voice calls out:

"May I come in?"

"Pearl!" Christian Graham cries, pleasantly, eagerly very perceptible in his tones. "How late you are!"

"We had given over expecting you," Nellie says, taking both the girl's hands in her own; "it is growing quite late, dear child."

"It is not yet nine, Nell; your rooms are dimly lighted. I am not too late to be welcome, I hope?"

"As though that could ever be!" Nellie tells her.

"Nellie knew that you had company at home," Christian says, "and we concluded that that would keep you away."

"We have had a quiet day by any means. Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds and the Woodfords came this morning, but they went away nearly an hour ago. Since then papa has honored me by taking me into his confidence. Did you notice the gentleman walking with papa," the girl continues, some of the freshness fading out of her tones, "the one who was so very dark, Nell?"

"I did, Pearl. I wondered who he could be; I have not seen him before."

"No; you have never seen him before, Nell. He is the oldest son of my father's. He is heir-apparent to Banner-Cross."

"Heir-apparent to Banner-Cross?" Nell repeats wonderingly.

"Have you forgotten, Nellie? Banner-Cross is strictly entailed upon male heirs, and papa has no son. You can not have forgotten, Christian?"

"No," he replies; "but I rarely gave a thought to the matter. You have not been upon very intimate terms with this young man, Pearl."

"No. There had been some unpleasantness between papa and uncle for many years before uncle's death, and there never was a reconciliation; but last winter we met Deighton, and papa took quite a fancy to him. Where are you going?" she added, abruptly, as Nellie Graham rises from her chair.

"Only to ring for lights."

"Then don't do it yet," she begins. "This quiet room, with its dim, religious light—is that a correct quotation, Christian?—is a relief after the glare and gaiety of the day."

And besides, I have come to tell you something which I think will be better 'told by the moonlight alone' than by any artificial light; and we shall have a splendid moon presently."

She seats herself upon a low ottoman at Nellie's feet, and rests her head upon Nellie's lap. Rarely lovely she must be, seen by the full light of day; even in the shadowy room her beauty is apparent. Her eyes must be black, and, if her face is not perfect, and almost devoid of color, it appears so now.

"I often think," she begins, dreamily, "what a comfort it must have been to my mother to know that she was always welcome to come here, when she could escape the constant noise and gaiety of her own home. It was no greater comfort or blessing, though, to her than it has been to her daughter."

"Christian has just been saying," Nellie puts in softly, "that the comfort was mutual in the case of our mothers. I know that it is in the case of their children."

"Did Nellie deliver the message papa gave you?" the girl asks, turning her face to Christian, but repaying Nellie's speech with a gentle hand pressure.

"About my neglect in visiting him? Yes, she did."

"It pained me to hear him, Christian. But what could I say? To think of sending such a message to you, and by your own sister!"

"It hurt neither Nellie nor me, Pearl."

"He speaks so of everybody who adopts a profession, Christian; you know that he does. Oh, I wish that he would not!"

"I always esteem myself fortunate in having such a profession; in being thought worthy to succeed my father, not only in his home, but in his church. Your father's words can not take from me my sense of pride and satisfaction, Pearl."

"But you said you had something to tell us," Nell interposes, gently. "Suppose, dear, that you tell us what it is."

Nellie Graham feels a shiver run through Pearl Frith's slight form. She looks down upon the face lying in her lap; the moon

has just sailed into the dark blue heavens, and the beams fall upon the young girl's features. Nellie Graham fancies that their expression is sad and weary, and that they are paler than they are wont to be.

"What is it, Pearl?" she asks with quick sympathy.

"This afternoon papa called you poor," the girl says very quietly; "but he forgot to add that his own child is very little better than a beggar."

Neither brother nor sister speak; both fail to comprehend the girl's meaning.

"He called me into the library, after they had all gone away, all except cousin Deighton—his visit will doubtless extend over an indefinite period," Pearl continues; "and while there he told me that his affairs were in a most embarrassed condition, and that if he died to-morrow I should be left penniless."

"But your mother's fortune, that was large? I have heard mine say so many times. Surely he can settle that upon you?"

"It all went, Christian, long ago. I have known that for some time past. Just for one moment consider the gay life and reckless extravagance that have always been the rule at Banner-Cross."

"It is shameful! And you, his only child," Nellie cries indignantly, "to leave your future wholly unprotected?"

"But he has provided for it," she observes, with quiet bitterness. "I am to become my cousin's wife; he is good enough to say that he will take me, portionless though I am."

"Pearl!"

"Oh, it is quite true, Nell! Papa read me quite a homily upon the gratitude I ought to feel towards him, and taxed me with all the cardinal sins—stupidity being the predominant one—because I manifested some reluctance and hesitation to accept at once the future he has marked out for me."

"But, my dear child, what will you do?"

"I do not know what I shall do. I have asked for a few days to consider the matter."

"And if you refuse?" interrogates Miss Graham.

"As if I dared, Nell! No, there is but one course open to me."

"And that?"

"Is, of course, to make a martyr of myself; a martyr not greatly to be commiserated, many would think."

"Do you think you can love him in time? I judge you do not now on your manner."

"It is Christian who speaks; but his tones have lost their pleasantness—they are hard and forced."

"Involutionally Pearl lifts her head from Nellie's lap, and turns towards him, striving to peer through the gloom and shadows. But the moonbeams are friendly. They play at his feet; they kiss Pearl's cheeks and braided tresses, and rich evening dress; they pour a stream of refulgent light upon Nellie's pure, earnest face; but serve only to throw Christian more entirely into the darkness; they tell no tales of eyes that reflect great mental pain, of cheeks from which every vestige of color has departed, of firmly-closed lips, and hands tightly clenched within each other."

"What did you say, Christian?"

"This man, Pearl, whom your father elects for your future husband—do you love him?"

"Love him?" she echoes. "What an old-fashioned question! What an old-fashioned thing to talk about!"

"Nevertheless marriage can not be happy without it."

"And who will care if I am happy or wretched?" the girl cries, with a sudden outburst of passion. "I shall marry this man, and in due course become mistress of Banner-Cross, and my father will be more than satisfied; he will never ask if I love or am loved. I shall be rich and my friends will adore it a fortunate thing for me that my cousin condescended from his high estate to marry a portionless girl, and think that, if I am not more than content, I must indeed be hard to please."

"Hush, hush, dear!" Nellie says, touching the girl's hair with gentle caressing fingers. "Christian and I always care for your happiness."